



Engaged communities, critical citizens: A pedagogy for collaboratively developing knowledge and solutions to public issues

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Keywords: Grounded theory, critical community engaged scholarship, higher education, classroom pedagogy, public good

Conference track: Contexts and methods: Theoretical and conceptual frameworks, research designs, and methodological issues

Format: Research/Scholarly paper

Summary

Community-engaged scholarship is recommended as a practice for achieving civic engagement outcomes. Yet community-engaged scholarship has multiple meanings, which results in confusion about which practices should be integrated into higher education pedagogy. I propose an integrated definition and six crucial components of community-engaged scholarship and a new direction—critical community-engaged scholarship. In this paper, I connect knowledge from multiple sources to construct one definition for community-engaged scholarship based on what these terms have in common.

I utilized MaxQDA—a qualitative data analysis software—and grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). I systematically coded the data, sorted it into axial codes, and synthesized the axial codes into one integrated theory—my working definition for community-engaged scholarship. Six components that can be applied to classroom pedagogy emerged repeatedly in the literature. Ideally, community-engaged scholarship includes: 1) scholarly investigation of *real-life social problems* or *public issues*; 2) real-life social problems and research to address these problems that are defined *with or by* the community; 3) *knowledge* to solve or improve public issues that is *collaboratively developed* by universities and communities; 4) the utilization of *institutional resources* and knowledge to solve these real-life social problems; 5) community-university partnerships that are *collaborative and reciprocal* and have *shared authority* in defining success; and 6) community-engaged research or projects that are related to faculty members' research and teaching.

The six components define community-engaged scholarship; in the context of our unequal and diverse nation, it is now more crucial than ever for US higher education institutions to graduate students who are committed to participate for justice in our democracy. It is time to connect knowledge from multiple sources to provide clarity and direction for higher education professionals interested in shaping civic-engagement for the public good.

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